

FACTSHEET



U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 2451 Crystal Drive, Suite 200, Arlington, Virginia 20598

National Intellectual Property Rights Coordination Center

The National Intellectual Property Rights Coordination Center (IPR Center) stands at the forefront of the United States Government's response to global counterfeiting that currently threatens the public's health and safety. In response to the upsurge in this criminal activity, the IPR Center was recently restructured and relocated to a new "state of the art" facility in Arlington, Virginia.

Led by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the IPR Center brings together, in a single location, the major U.S. agencies responsible for the enforcement of laws related to intellectual property crimes and customs trade fraud. As part of this new task force setting, the IPR Center optimizes the authorities and resources of its partner agencies - U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Food and Drug Administration Office of Criminal Investigations (FDA-OCI), the Department of Justice Computer Crimes and Intellectual Property Rights Section (CCIPS), the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, and the Department of Commerce.

The IPR Center's mission is to insure national security by protecting the health and safety of the United States public, and stopping predatory and unfair trade practices that threaten the global economy.

The entry of goods into the United States is an integral part of the economic health of our nation. This country seeks to create full employment and economic prosperity through international trade and the opening of new consumer markets to U.S. goods. However, with the growth of international trade and open border policies comes an increased risk of border security compromises as well as threats to national security, and economic crime. Economic crime poses a significant danger to the financial stability of the U.S. homeland. Customs trade fraud enforcement is a priority of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and ICE.

To meet these strategic goals, the IPR Center established objectives to improve the administration and enforcement of international trade laws and agreements. These objectives respond to predatory trade practices that endanger the public health and our economy, and restrict the competitiveness of the U.S. products in the global market.

The IPR Center encompasses more than just intellectual property enforcement. It also manages and supports the ICE commercial fraud program, focusing on commercial importations involving false statements and deceptive business practices. The IPR Center has recognized that those criminals engaged in IPR violations are often involved in other types of commercial fraud violations. By combining these programs at the IPR Center, ICE is able to take a comprehensive approach to addressing these vulnerabilities. Fraud investigations are important components of an overall trade strategy whereby ICE and CBP concentrate on enforcing revenue protection and, increasingly, non-revenue protection laws and regulations. Successful cases produce significant seizures, civil penalties, and criminal prosecutions.

ICE CUSTOMS TRADE FRAUD & PRIORITY PROGRAM AREAS:

A. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

Illegal activities associated with the illegal importation, transportation and distribution of counterfeit goods subject to trademarks and copyrights registered with CBP.

B. HEALTH AND SAFETY/ ENVIRONMENTAL CRIMES

Illegal activities associated with the importation, transportation and distribution of imported items that pose a threat to U.S. consumers and/or the environment

C. DIVERSION OF IN-BOND MERCHANDISE INTO U.S. COMMERCE

Illegal activities associated with diversion and in-bond manipulation schemes.

D. TEXTILE TRANSSHIPMENTS

Illegal activities associated with the transshipment and false declaration of textiles and wearing apparel to avoid quotas.

E. TRADE AGREEMENT ENFORCEMENT

Enforce the elements of trade agreements to prevent circumvention of established guidelines.

F. FORCED/CHILD/CONVICT/INDENTURED LABOR

Identify foreign manufacturers and U.S. importers associated with goods produced through forced or convict labor.

G. TOBACCO SMUGGLING

Identify illegal activities associated with tobacco smuggling and create an environment where such illegal and unethical practices do not occur.

H. GENERAL FRAUD

Includes illegal activities associated with anti-dumping/countervailing duties, undervaluation, markings, misclassification, broker compliance, etc.

ICE also targets the above detailed areas of vulnerability as part of the *Operation Cornerstone* initiative. *Cornerstone* is an economic security initiative that focuses the alternative financing mechanisms that criminal organizations use to earn, move, and store funds. Our goal is to disrupt and dismantle alternative funding mechanisms *before* these organizations can exploit them for their own purposes.

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